

Message Text

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SUBJECT: AVEROFF ACCOUNT OF FORMATION OF KARAMANLIS GOVT

1. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION REPORTED SEPARATELY AVEROFF REVIEWED CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING UP TO FORMATION OF KARAMANLIS GOVT. ACCORDING TO HIM PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS, SUPPORTED BY SHAFK GENERAL BONANOS, ADMIRAL ARAPAKIS, GENERAL PAPANICOLAOU AND GENERAL DAVOS, TOOK INITIATIVE. GENERAL GALATSANOS WAS INCLUDED IN DISCUSSIONS BUT SEEMED MORE INCLINED TOWARD POSITION OF BRIG. GENERAL IOANNIDES AGAINST IMMEDIATE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT. PRESIDENT GHIZIKIS TOOK POSITION THAT OLD GOVERNMENT MUST GO WITHIN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS AND NEW START MADE.

2. AVEROFF INDICATED HE WAS FIRST PERSON WHOM GHIZIKIS CONSULTED EARLY JULY 23. AVEROFF'S INITIAL QUESTION WAS, IF NEW CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED, WHAT POSITION OF BRIGADIER GENERAL IOANNIDES WOULD BE. GHIZIKIS ASSURED HIM THAT "HIS BOYS" INDICATE SUPPORT FOR MOVE TO NEW GOVERNMENT BUT SUGGESTED AVEROFF SHOULD SEE IOANNIDES PERSONALLY TO CHECK. AVEROFF REFUSED BECAUSE HE FEARED IT WOULD EXPOSE HIM TO CHARGES OF COLLUSION WITH IOANNIDES. SITUATION WAS DIFFICULT BECAUSE IOANNIDES WAS "VERY STRONG" AND HAD TOUGH GROUP OF SUPPORTERS WHO WOULD HAVE TO BE FACED DOWN AT SOME POINT, PERHAPS AS EARLY AS AT MEETING PLANNED FOR JULY 27 AS REPORTED SEPARATELY. AVEROFF SAID MILITARY OBVIOUSLY WANTED WEAKER GOVERNMENT

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THAN THAT WHICH HAD NOW BEEN ESTABLISHED AND OPINED

THAT DIFFICULTIES CERTAINLY COULD BE EXPECTED BECAUSE OF INCLUSION OF "BOMBERS" SUCH AS MANGAKIS AND LIBERALS LIKE PESMAZOGLOU. AT SAME TIME INCLUSION OF SUCH INDIVIDUALS ADDED STRENGTH TO GOVERNMENT AND COULD EASE PROBLEM OF ANDREAS PAPANDREOU.

3. AT THIS JUNCTURE OTHER FORMER POLITICAL LEADERS WERE INVITED BY GHIZIKIS TO JOIN MEETING WITH MILITARY CHIEFS. ACCORDING TO AVEROFF CENTRAL POINT OF DISCUSSIONS AFTERNOON OF JULY 23 WAS WHO SHOULD BE PRIME MINISTER. CONSIDERATION QUICKLY BOILED DOWN TO KANELLOPOULOS OR KARAMANLIS. AVEROFF'S PERSONAL CHOICE WAS KANELLOPOULOS WHOM HE STILL BELIEVED WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER MAN FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE. HOWEVER MAVROS HAD STRONGLY OPPOSED HIM AND DECLARED HE COULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN KANELLOPOULOS GOVERNMENT. MAVROS MODIFIED HIS POSITION ONLY AFTER SUGGESTION MADE TO HIM THAT HE WOULD BE BOTH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER. NUMBER OF THOSE PRESENT TENDED INITIALLY TO RULE OUT KARAMANLIS ON GROUNDS HE HAD BEEN AWAY TOO LONG AND IN ANY CASE COULD NOT RETURN QUICKLY ENOUGH TO MEET URGENT NEED TO SET UP NEW GOVERNMENT IMMEDIATELY.

4. AVEROFF NOTED THAT AT TIME THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE OCCURRING GREECE WAS WITHOUT CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT SINCE ALL DAY JULY 23 NEITHER THEN PRIME MINISTER ANDROUTSOPOULOS NOR FOREIGN MINISTER KYPREOS COULD BE REACHED. AVEROFF SAID HE POINTED OUT THAT KARAMANLIS COULD BE IN ATHENS WITHIN FEW HOURS, PROVIDED ALL AGREED, AND HE WAS EVENTUALLY AUTHORIZED TO TELEPHONE HIM IN PARIS. KARAMANLIS' INITIAL REACTION WAS NEGATIVE AND IN ANY CASE HE SAID HE WOULD NEED AT LEAST FORTY-EIGHT HOURS. AVEROFF SAID HE MADE PLAIN THAT HIS IMMEDIATE RETURN WAS ESSENTIAL AND ARRANGEMENTS THEN WENT FORWARD ACCORDING TO WHICH KARAMANLIS AGREED TO COME IMMEDIATELY, AS HE DID, ARRIVING IN ATHENS IN EARLY MORNING HOURS JULY 24.

5. AVEROFF SAID THAT SHAFK BONANOS AND THE CHIEFS OF THE THREE SERVICES ALL AGREED ON THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

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ALL FOUR TELEPHONED IOANNIDES TO CONVEY DECISION. HE TOLD THEM HE DID NOT AGREE, THAT HE DID NOT THINK THIS WAS A GOOD THING BUT SINCE MATTER HAD BEEN DECIDED HE WOULD RESPECT DECISION. THEY PRESSED HIM TO GIVE HIS WORD THAT HE WOULD NOT ALLOW "HIS BOYS" TO INTERFERE, WHICH PRESUMABLY HE DID.

6. AVEROFF MADE IT PLAIN THAT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN

NEW GOVERNMENT AND IOANNIDES REMAINED STRAINED AND
EMPHASIZED HIS VIEW, AS REPORTED SEPARATELY (ATHENS 5099)
CONFRONTATION WAS BOUND TO COME. HOWEVER, CIRCUMSTANCES
MUST BE CAREFULLY CHOSEN AND HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT IN
DUE COURSE BY MOVING CAUTIOUSLY IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE
IOANNIDES' RETIREMENT OR TRANSFER AND TO DISPERSE HIS
TOUGHEST AND MOST LOYAL SUPPORTERS WITHIN
THE MILITARY TO NEW POSITIONS WHERE THEY COULD NOT
CONSPIRE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. INITIAL STEPS, HE
SAID, WOULD SOON BE ANNOUNCED.
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